

II. CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for prepayment of a ~~service~~ content, comprising the steps of:

informing the user of the availability of a plurality of different-~~services~~ contents for downloading;

receiving from the user over a first communications link an indication of a desired ~~service~~ content and a request for the desired-~~service~~ content;

receiving from the user an authentication key to indicate prepayment for the requested-~~service~~ content;

verifying the validity of the authentication key; and

providing the requested ~~service~~ content to the user over a second communications link.

2. (Cancelled)
3. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein an authentication key is required each time a ~~service~~ content is provided.
4. (Original) A method according to claim 1, the method further comprising:

the step of arranging each of the authentication keys to indicate a time period during which they are valid;

the step of verifying of validity of the authentication key comprises the step of comparing of the present date with time period during which the authentication key is valid; and

the step of rejecting expired authentication keys.

5. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the method further comprises the following steps before receiving the request from the user;

generating the authentication key;

maintaining an authentication key validity database for verifying the validity of any of the generated authentication keys; and

delivering the authentication key to a user.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 4, the method further comprising:

the step of scanning the data base of used authentication keys for detecting lapsed authentication keys for removing them from the data base of used authentication keys.

8. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 5, wherein the method further comprises the step of modifying the validity database on providing the requested ~~service~~ content so that the monetary value corresponding to the authentication key indicating the payment is reduced according to a price of the ~~service~~ content requested by the user.

9. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the authentication key is a printed user readable code.

10. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the method further comprises the step of concealing the authentication key with a non-reversibly removable concealing means.
11. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, wherein the method further comprises printing a group of authentication keys on a card.
12. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the first communications link is based on at least one of the following: a data network, a telephone network, a mobile telecommunications network, a local area network and a wide area network.
13. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, the method further comprising the steps of:
 - allowing the user to test a ~~service~~ content requested; and
 - receiving a final verification from the user before the user is provided with the ~~service~~ content.
14. (Currently Amended) A system for prepayment of a ~~service~~ content, comprising:
 - means for informing the user of the availability of a plurality of different ~~services~~ contents for downloading;
 - means for receiving from the user over a first communications link an indication of a desired ~~service~~ content and a request for the desired ~~service~~ content; and
 - means for receiving from the user an authentication key to indicate prepayment for the requested ~~service~~ content;

means for verifying the validity of the authentication key;
and

means for providing the requested service content to the user
over a second communications link.

15. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for prepayment
of a service content, comprising:

computer readable program means for causing a computer to
inform the user of the availability of a plurality of
different-services contents for downloading;

computer readable program means for causing a computer to
receive from the user over a first a first communications
link an indication of a desired service content and a request
for the desired service content; and

computer readable program means for receiving from the user
an authentication key to indicate prepayment for the
requested service content;

computer readable program means for verifying the validity of
the authentication key; and

computer readable program means for causing a computer to
provide the requested service content to the user over a
second communications link.